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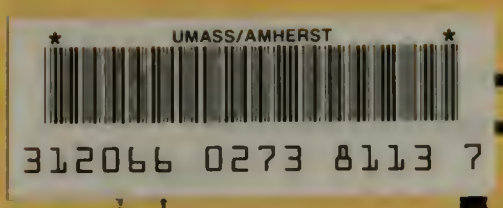

MASSACHUSETTS EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

UTILIZATION SURVEY

1986-1987

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Bureau of Educational Technologies
Massachusetts Educational Television
Massachusetts Department of Education
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Arlington, Masssachusetts 02174

883/107

Executive Summary of the 1986-87 MET Utilization Summary

SURVEY DESIGN

The survey was designed to find out how Massachusetts schools are using MET programs and services and what MET might do to meet the current and future needs of teachers and media specialists.

Surveys were sent to the media coordinator of 289 districts in the Commonwealth. District-wide information was requested, but building-only responses were also welcomed. The return-rate was good - 76% - with 60% of those representing district-wide information. Of the building-only responses, most were from high-school personnel, so the survey information is somewhat slanted towards high schools.

Following are some of the highlights of the information contained in this survey:

Utilization of MET Programs and Services

- 85% of Massachusetts school buildings use some of MET's programs and services
- MET's weekly broadcasts are used by 82% of the districts, primarily for taping programs
- the Program Guide (78%), the fall block schedule (72%), and the Teacher Guides (68%) are all used extensively by the districts
- science and social studies programs are the most extensively used at the high school and middle school level; reading and language arts programs are the most widely-used at the elementary level

Current Trends

- 97% of the schools in Massachusetts have VCRs, so most schools now use MET programs on videocassettes. Only 2% of the districts rated off-air use of MET programs as "high".
- In 1986-87, MET provided more hours of programming through both the lending library and the tape duplication than through the broadcast service on Channels 2 & 57.
- there is a wide discrepancy in the amount of equipment available to teachers. High schools have an average of 10 TVs and 5 VCRs, middle schools 4.5 TVs and 2.8 VCRs, and elementary schools 3.8 TVs and 2.1 VCRs.
- the greatest number of districts reported having an equipment budget in the $501-$2000 range.

Future Planning

- health/guidance and language arts were the two curriculum areas most widely cited for being underserved by MET
- lack of staff is the greatest inhibitor to using MET programs and services. Staff are needed to record programs, to schedule equipment, to disseminate information, and to provide utilization training
- schools listed more blockbroadcasting, preview cassettes, and a curriculum index relating each program to curriculum objectives as priorities for MET.

RESULTS OF 1986 MET SURVEY

I. SURVEY OVERVIEW

The 1986 MET survey was designed to find out how Massachusetts schools are using MET services and what MET might do to meet the current needs of teachers and media specialists. It covered programming, utilization and equipment with the intent of identifying specific curricula needs as well as determining what changes MET should make in its program delivery.

In November of 1986, surveys were sent to the media coordinator of 289 districts in the Commonwealth, and 219 responses were received. District-wide information was requested, but building-only responses were also welcomed as many districts do not have a media coordinator. Of the 219 responses, 130 represented district-wide information, and the remaining 89 were building-only responses. Almost all of the building-only responses represented high schools, as the surveys were directed to the high school if no media coordinator existed. Also, most of the media coordinators are located at the district high school. As a result, the information for the high schools is more extensive than for the middle and elementary schools.

TABLE I

Response Information of MET 1986 Survey

Surveys sent	Surveys returned	District-wide returns	Building-only returns	Return rate
289	219	130	89	76%

II. AWARENESS AND USE OF MET SERVICES

The surveys indicate wide-spread awareness and use of MET programs and services. 94% of those responding are aware of MET, and according to the district-wide returns, 85% of Massachusetts school buildings use MET programs. The fall block schedule, the program guide and the teacher guides are all used by over 65% of the districts who responded.

TABLE II-A

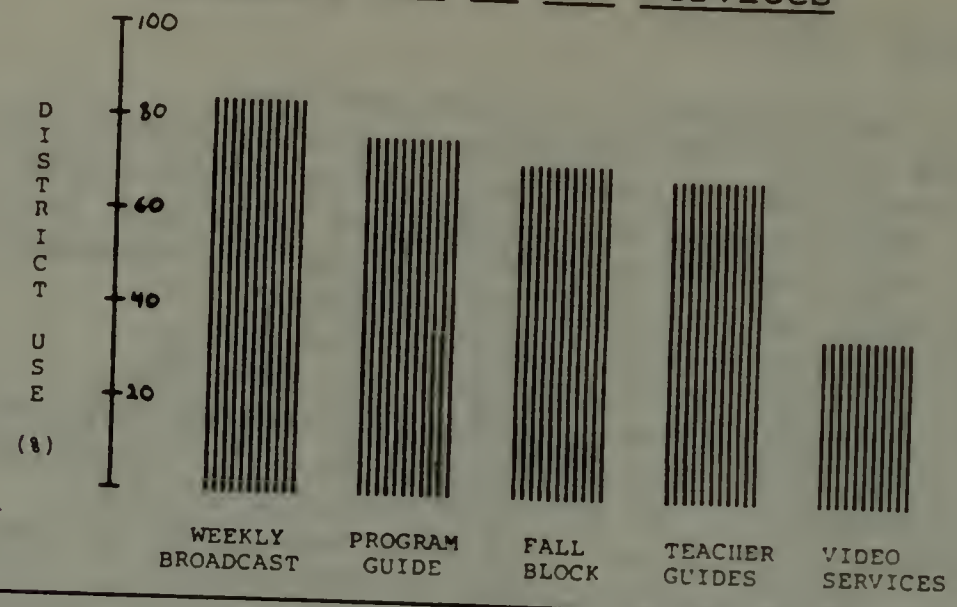
Awareness and Building Use of MET Programs and Services

# of returns	Aware of MET	% aware	# of buildings reporting*	# of buildings using MET*	% using
219	207	94%	873	741	85%

* based on figures from district-wide returns

TABLE II-B

District Use of MET Services



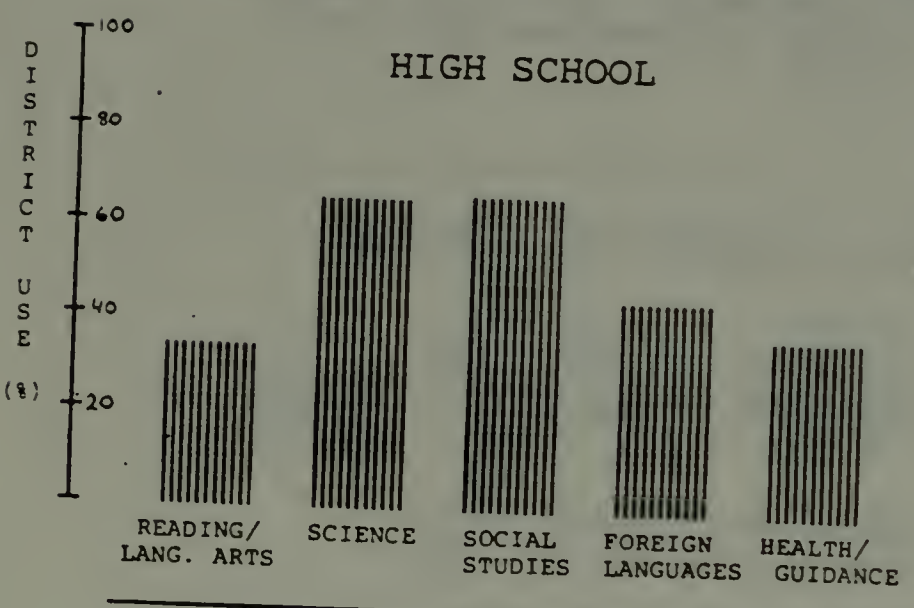
III. PROGRAMMING

A. MET Use by Curriculum Area

The media coordinators were asked to identify the curriculum areas, by grade level, in which teachers in their district use MET programs. Due to the significant number of surveys which were answered by high school personnel, high school science and social studies were listed on the greatest number of surveys, even on those which represented district-wide information. Middle schools also make the greatest use of science and social studies programs, while in the elementary schools, reading/language arts programs are the most popular. Not coincidentally, MET carries the most programs in science and social studies for middle and high schools, and in reading for elementary schools.

TABLE III-A

High and Middle School Use of MET Programs by Curriculum Area



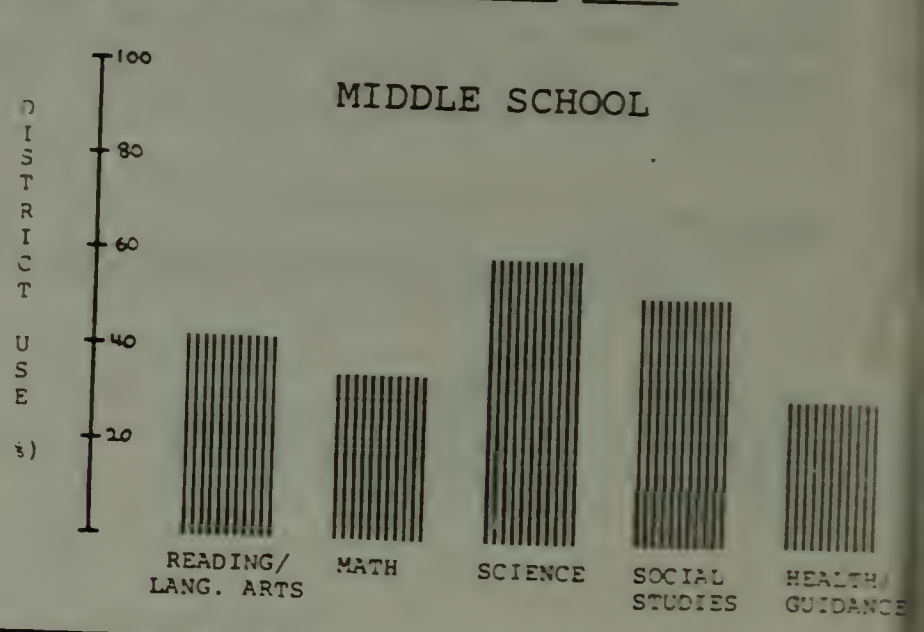
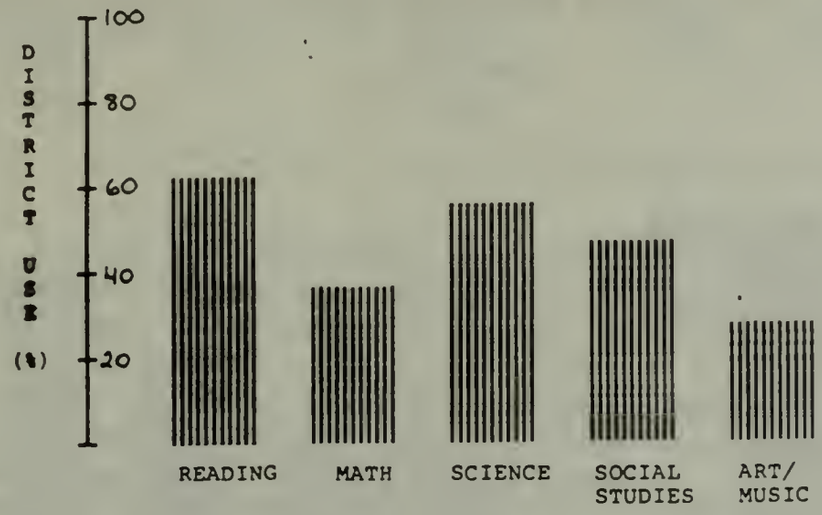


TABLE III-A2

Elementary Use by Curriculum Area



B. Curriculum Areas Underserved by MET Programming

The following chart shows the curriculum areas, by grade level, which were identified as the most needed and currently underserved by MET. All are high school level for reasons stated in the overview. Many of the districts did not identify any curriculum area as being underserved.

Curriculum Area Underserved	# Districts Citing
High school health/guidance	17
" language arts	15
" social studies	11
" math	10
" literature	10

IV. UTILIZATION AND DISSEMINATION

A. Utilization of Off-Air and Block Schedule

Most school districts now utilize MET programming on videocassette. VCRs are available in over 90% of Massachusetts schools (see Section 5), and their availability has made it easier for teachers to overcome some of the problems associated with off-air use, such as scheduling, poor reception and the lack of cable drops in classrooms. Off-air use was rated as "high" by only 2% of the districts.

Schools are taking advantage of MET's block schedule to videotape the programs they need. 74% of the districts rate their use of the block schedule as moderate or high, even though only 49% of them have a staff person at each school building who is responsible for taping educational programs. In addition, an overwhelming majority of districts indicated a desire for increased blockbroadcasting (see Table VI-B). The major inhibitors to using the block schedule are lack of staff (29% of the responses) and difficulty in scheduling equipment for recording (24%).

TABLE IV-A

Off-air and Block Schedule Use of MET Programming

Off-air use	% Districts	Block schedule use	% Districts
High	2%	High	34%
Moderate	19%	Moderate	40%
Low	79%	Low	26%

B. Utilization of Video Services

Many schools also utilize MET's video services to obtain videocassette copies of programs. 33% of the districts reported having used the duplication service, and 25% have used the lending library. In the 1986-7 school year, more hours of programming were provided to the schools through both the lending library and the tape duplication than through the broadcast service on Channels 2 and 57. Convenience (17% of the responses) and lack of staff to tape off-air (17%) were the primary reasons cited for using the video services.

TABLE IV-B

Hours of Programming Provided by MET's Broadcast Service, Tape Duplication, and Lending Library, 1983-1987

FY	Broadcast	Tape Duplication	Lending Library
1983	659	178	129
1984	723	212	162
1985	728	1026*	402
1986	722	866	442
1987	720	1085	800

*in FY85, MET received one order for 500 hours of duplication

C. In-Service Training

Very few districts (7%) have a staff person who offers in-service training on the use of MET programs. However, 42% of them indicated there is "a great deal of interest" in having an MET staff person come to their schools for in-service workshops.

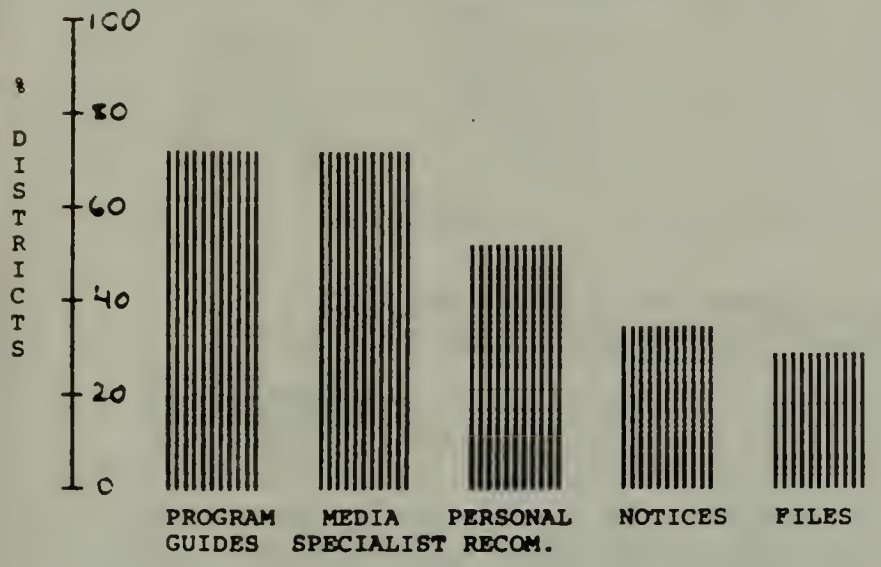
D. Dissemination of Information and Program Acquisition

Most teachers find out about MET programs and services from the program guide which is mailed to every school building in the Commonwealth, from the media specialist or librarian, or from another teacher who recommends a particular program or service. Lack of staff is a critical issue in dissemination as it is in utilization. Those districts who have staff responsible for taping educational programs are more likely to use notices, files, and newsletters to update information about MET. They are also more likely to use previews and personal evaluations to decide which programs to promote or acquire. Districts without such staff rely more on program guide descriptions and teacher requests for their acquistions.

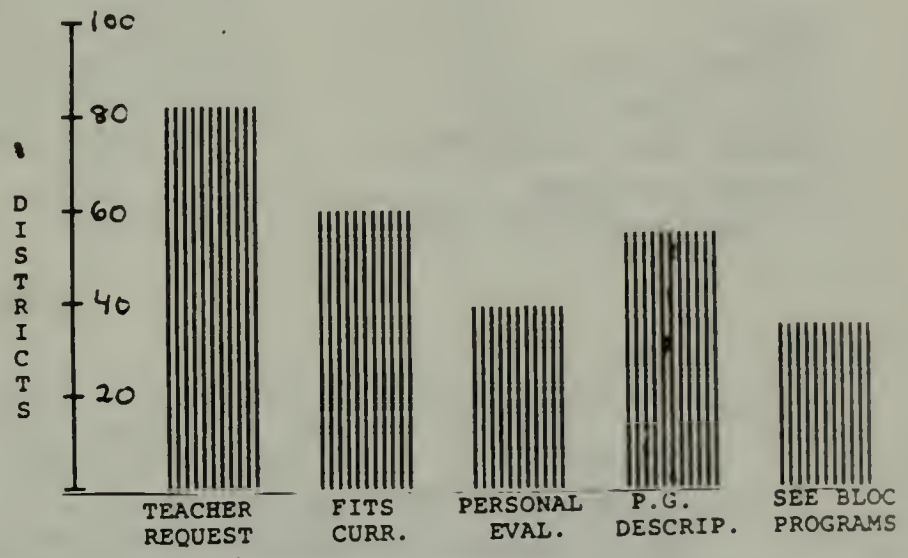
Table IV-D

Dissemination of Information and Program Acquisition

Dissemination - how teachers find out about MET



Acquisition - how med. specs. decide which progs. to acquire



V. EQUIPMENT

A. Availability of Equipment

As noted earlier, most schools (97%) now have VCRs and TV/monitors. High schools are generally better equipped than either middle or elementary schools, perhaps due to high school course offerings in media production. There is still a significant need for more equipment, though, as evidenced by the fact that 90% of the districts purchased VCRs in the 1986-7 year, and 68% have plans to purchase additional VCRs in '87-88.

The overwhelming majority of districts (89%) have or plan to have cable televisionin the schools. By way of contrast, only 7% of the districts have or plan to have a satellite dish.

Video disc players are gradually working their way into schools. 12% of the districts purchased one or more video disc players this past year, and 14% indicated they plan to purchase one or more in the upcoming year. Large screen projection units are even more popular, with 17% having purchased one or more in '86-87 and 14% planning a purchase in '87-88.

Table V-A1

Average Number of VCRs and TV/Monitors in Elementary, Middle and High Schools

	Elementary	Middle	High School
TV/monitors	3.78	4.54	9.82
VCRs w/ timers	2.14	2.79	5.10

Table V-A2

Equipment Purchases and Purchase Plans in 1986-87 and 1987-88

Equipment	% districts purchasing 1+ in '86-87	% districts planning to purchase 1+ in '87-88*
VCRs	90%	68%
TV/monitors	85%	67%
Vid. disc plyr	12%	14%
Satellite dishes	3%	2%
Large screen projection units	17%	14%

* several districts were unaware of '87-88 plans at time of survey

B. Scheduling of Equipment

High school teachers have a much easier time than middle school or elementary school teachers in scheduling equipment for the use of MET programs. Elementary school teachers have the hardest time, not only because of the disparity in equipment numbers among the levels, but also because they have fewer staff at their disposal with responsibilities in media. Lack of staff is a problem at all levels in scheduling equipment.

Table V-B

Are Teachers Able to Schedule Equipment to Use MET Programs

	Always	Sometimes	Rarely
Elementary	35%	58%	7%
Middle	48%	45%	7%
High School	63%	33%	4%

C. Equipment Budget

The greatest number of districts have a yearly budget for TV and video equipment, including tapes, in the $500-$2000 range. 14 districts (12%) have a budget of less than $500, the same number as have a budget of over $10,000. Looking just at high schools, the greatest number again have a budget in the $500-2000 range. An almost equal number have budgets less than $500 (21) as have budgets in the $2000 - $5000 range (20). No attempt was made to compare budget to the size of the district. Several districts indicated that AV equipment is not part of the budget, and that most purchases have been made using school improvement money, block grants, or class gifts.

Table V-C

Equipment Budget of Districts and High Schools

Budget range	% districts	Budget range	% high schools
0-$500	12%	0-$500	28%
$501-$2000	42%	$501-$2000	42%
$2001-$5000	22%	$2001-$5000	27%
$5001-$10,000	12%	$5001-$10,000	3%
over $10,000	12%	over $10,000	0%

VI. FUTURE PLANNING

A. Problems

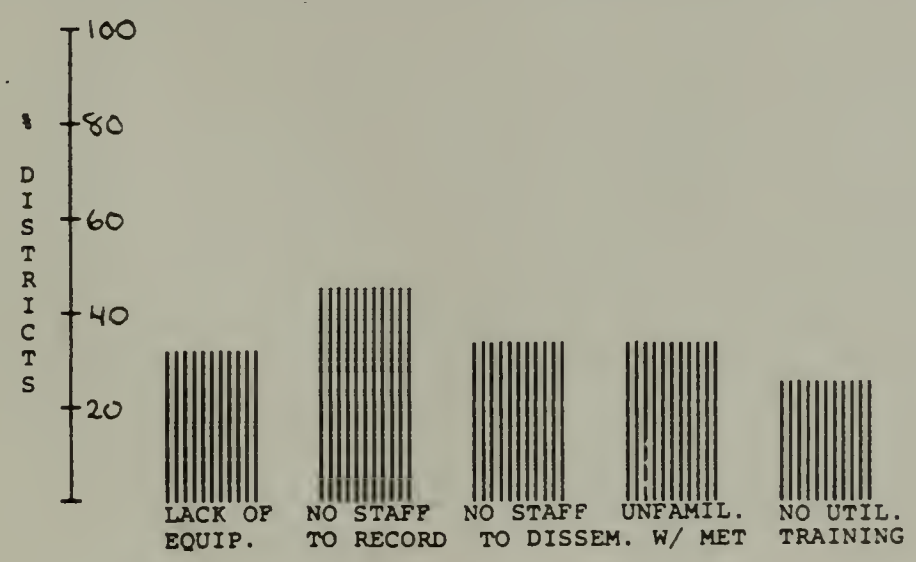
As mentioned throughout this report, lack of staff is the greatest problem in the utilization of MET programs and services, greater even than lack of equipment. The need for staff is most critical for recording programs and scheduling equipment, but staff are also needed to disseminate information and to provide utilization/in-service training for teachers.

A significant portion of the districts cited lack of familiarity with MET programs as a major problem for them. This could be partly explained by the lack of staff to disseminate information, as well as by a reduction in the utilization/training staff of MET.

Lack of equipment is a problem in many districts. Several report that they cannot record programs off the air because all of their equipment is tied up for playback purposes in the classrooms. Others cite problems with old or broken equipment. Many districts do not have adequate equipment to meet the needs of the teachers.

Table VI-A

Problems in Using MET Programs and Services



B. How MET Can Help

Now that schools have VCRs, most realize the value of MET's blockbroadcasts, so more blockbroadcasting was given the highest priority of seven possible choices for MET to pursue. Next in importance was providing preview cassettes describing all MET programs in subject or grade level areas. These cassettes would obviously be very useful to those districts who reported a lack of familiarity with MET programs in their district. Providing schools with an index relating each MET program to specific curriculum objectives, providing more program guides, and sending MET staff to conduct in-service workshops were also mentioned on a significant number of the surveys.

Table VI-B

How Met Can Help